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# National school lunch program

U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Production and Marketing Administration  
Washington 25, D.C.

## NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH ACT

The President signed the National School Lunch Act on June 4, 1946. In that act "It is . . . declared to be the policy of Congress, as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food, by assisting the States, through grants-in-aid and other means, in providing an adequate supply of foods and other facilities for the establishment, maintenance, operation, and expansion of nonprofit school-lunch programs." The United States Department of Agriculture is responsible for carrying out the provisions of the act.

### FUNDS

Federal funds will be apportioned among the States according to the number of children enrolled in school and per capita income of the State. The law requires, however, that Federal funds accepted be matched dollar for dollar by the State until 1951. After that year, the State contribution will be increased.

### A COMMUNITY PROGRAM

School lunches are a community affair. It's simple to start a school-lunch program. Any group that is interested, such as a parent-teacher association, service club, or other civic group, can co-operate with school officials in initiating one and can become a sponsor.

The sponsor is responsible for operating the lunch program in the school. The sponsor provides facilities, equipment, supervision, labor, and additional funds needed for the program. Expenditures for such items may count toward the matching of Federal funds. A reasonable value may be put on goods and services contributed to the program. A small amount may be charged the children for the lunch if they are able to pay. Money derived from these sources may also be counted toward matching Federal funds.

## ELIGIBILITY

Public and nonprofit private schools of high school level or under may apply for Federal aid. The program must be operated on a nonprofit basis. The lunch must be available to all children regardless of their ability to pay and without discrimination. Application should be made to the State Department of Education or other State agency designated by the Governor.

## REIMBURSEMENT

Assistance is in the form of reimbursement after purchases have been made. The total amount which a school may receive depends on the type of lunch served, the amount spent for food, the need for aid, and the number of lunches served to children. There is no reimbursement for meals for adults.

The sponsor enters into an agreement with the State agency. Food is purchased locally by the sponsor's representative and reimbursement is made monthly in keeping with the provisions of the program. There is also help for the purchase of equipment used in storing, preparing, and serving food for school lunches. Prior approval must be obtained from the State agency for each piece of equipment to be paid for out of funds available for this program.

## LUNCH TYPES

The school lunch should provide nutritive value as well as satisfaction and enjoyment to the student. It should also help in the development of good eating habits. As an incentive for providing a wholesome lunch, the highest rate of reimbursement is given for the complete lunch. This is known as Type A and consists of the following foods:

1. One-half pint of whole milk as a beverage.
2. Two ounces of lean meat, poultry, fish, or cheese, or one egg, or one-half cup of dry beans or peas, or four tablespoons of peanut butter.



3. Three-fourths cup of vegetables or fruit or both.
4. One or more portions of bread or muffins or other hot bread made of whole-grain cereal or enriched flour.
5. Two teaspoons of butter or fortified margarine.

It is permissible to meet the protein requirement of item 2 by serving one-half the quantities of each of two of the protein-rich foods.

If a school has limited lunchroom facilities it may contract to serve a Type B lunch, which provides about two-thirds as much food as the Type A lunch. The Type B lunch should be supplemented by food brought from home.

Schools that have no lunchroom facilities may wish to provide milk for the pupils. Type C consists of one-half pint of whole milk as a beverage.

## FOODS FROM USDA

From time to time the Department of Agriculture makes available to schools operating a school-lunch program foods purchased under the price-support program. These foods are available upon written request of the sponsor who agrees to make suitable use of them to enrich the lunches served at school. They are given in addition to the reimbursement. Schools that are not receiving reimbursement, however, may receive these foods

## SUMMING UP

Good food, plenty of it and the right kinds, is particularly important during the growing and developing period.

The underlying purpose of the school-lunch program is to serve our school children the very best food that our farms can produce. The end results are improved national health and increased consumption of the products of our farms.

For further information, write to your State Department of Education or to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

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